

## Submission to the Legislative Council of Tasmania

### Select committee – Tasmanian forests Agreement Bill

I seek to make a submission to the Inquiry as a private individual, but drawing on my community roles in the Southwood Supporters Group and the Huon Resource Development Group.

The documents I enclose are all relevant to the terms of reference and reflect my views and those of many in the community who were members or supporters of these groups that I led for over a decade.

This submission includes the following documents

- Email to Legislative Council December 2012 on the bullying and blackmail that has led to this Agreement.
- Letter of support to Ta Ann Tasmania December 2011
- Letter to Jonathan West requesting Community consultation (that did not occur)
- Dot points from a presentation by the Huon Valley Council
- Submission to the House of Representatives inquiry and forest policy of the HRDG
- Critique of the Chairman of the Independent Verification Group's report that should have been the basis of the legislation.

I urge the Council to carefully consider my submission, and congratulate the Council for conducting this inquiry in the face of severe criticism. The evidence presented in the first days of your hearing, vindicates the decision of the Council to establish this Select committee.

Alan Duggan  
Main Road  
Cradoc, Tas 7109  
18 January 2013

## Email to all Legislative Councilors Dec 2012

The agreement reached between parties representing sections of the community, forest industry and the environmental movement, is the basis of this legislation. It is the result of a very long campaign against the forest industry by environmental groups.

Thirty years ago this campaign was designed to influence the political process and entailed protest action, the manipulation of the media, the lobbying of government and a fundraising campaign to finance this action. In the last decade this has expanded to influence the corporate world targeting banks, finance, shareholders and the retail sector. The campaigns are now using the internet to spread propaganda and to contact international customers and to coordinate international coalitions of green groups. The Green's campaign against the industry has been characterised by bullying and blackmail by these green groups.

Is it appropriate to legislate an agreement that is a result of bullying, or can the Legislative Council use the opportunity to ensure that the bullying, the blackmail and the hate campaign stop?

Examples of these campaigns include

- Getup! taking cyber action against Bunnings and others not to stock Tasmanian oak when peace talks collapsed in November 2012
- Invasion of work sites in Smithton and Huonville by Ground Swell, Huon Valley Environment Centre to force the parties to reach agreement
- Trespass into industrial works sites in the forest and at the wharf by protesters, disrupting lawful work and costing industry lost time, extra security and management time.
- Attacking international markets by Markets for Change and allied groups in Japan and United Kingdom, by direct visitation, production of defamatory material undermining the credentials of Tasmanian timber and a cyber action campaign designed to influence customers by emails and web sites.
- Making of defamatory statements against timber industry companies employing more than 10 people, within Tasmania and in other jurisdictions
- Targeting of the Commonwealth Bank for investing in the Tasmania forest Industry, the protesting outside ANZ banks for providing financial services. The international attack on HSBC for being the bank of a parent company whose subsidiary operates in Tasmania.

Many more actions are not new and have been duplicated around the world by Green Groups. International groups who have been involved include Global Witness, JATAN, Greenpeace and Rainforest Action Network.

Stopping these campaigns must be a prerequisite to creating any new reserves. The number and nature of any continuing campaign must be documented within any durability report to Parliament, as well as action taken to end or ameliorate the campaign activity. The current Bill however does not provide detailed requirements of such a durability report. Clause 3 defines it as "prepared by the Special Council".

Clause 24 outlines that Regulations “may be made in relation to the process to be undertaken in the preparation of the durability report, the matters to be considered in preparing the report, the preparation of the report and the form of the report”.

For such a key report to be presented Parliament the matters to be considered must be detailed in the Legislation not left to Government that may make a regulation.

An examination of the Agreement between the parties shows

“42. All elements of this agreement should be reviewed as part of each durability report, with key elements to be considered including progress with recognition of the agreed vision in legislation, implementing the reserve gazettals; achievement of wood supply commitments including specialty timbers; agreed transition plan and its implementation; short, medium and longer term residue solutions; ongoing public and proactive support for the outcomes of this agreement, including in markets for Tasmanian forest products; support for the recommendation that governments assess the World Heritage nomination; adequate progress with the achievement of certification, adequate and satisfactory outcomes in respect of this agreement, including but not limited to the clauses about Institutional Arrangements for Parks and Production Forest Management; equitable implementation of the industry restructuring and assistance packages; and support by governments for implementation of this agreement.”

Even this statement by the parties does not include reporting on action to stop the bullying, advising Parliament on the nature and type of protest action, incidence of cyber activity, workplace invasions, and results of prosecutions, negative market activity and adverse criticism by political or environmental groups. However it and an expanded statement directed at bullying and blackmail activities should be added to the legislation.

Whilst not arguing that the legislation should restrict political activity or even freedom of speech, the durability report must be able to list such activity and assess and report on its impact. Parliament must be able to reject a durability report if it considers the impact of bullying and blackmail campaigns is significant.

Laws to that allow defamation against companies that are willing to employ more than 10 people need to be amended and could be by this Bill. Section 9 of the Defamation Act 2005 could be deleted by this Bill. The Bill could also provide guidance to the serious consequences of such protest and cyber action to the Courts in determining sentences for offences related to these activities.

In conclusion, we should never reward bullying or blackmail as it will only lead to more, and it sets a poor example of what is acceptable. Without amendment the future markets, wood supply and financial support for existing or new companies can still be threatened by these campaigns.

The locking up of another 504,000 ha of Tasmania’s well managed and sustainable State forests is a heavy price to pay for this bullying and blackmail campaign, and if it is to be reserved, Parliament must be able to be satisfied that the impact of such campaigns is no longer significant. Importantly the reservation must be able to be revoked if the campaigns are restarted or are continued!

Simon Kang  
Executive Director  
Ta Ann Tasmania Pty Ltd  
150 Davey Street Hobart  
Tasmania 7000 Australia  
Email: [simon.kang@taanntas.com](mailto:simon.kang@taanntas.com)

Dear Simon,

On behalf of the members of the Huon Resource Development Group, I would like to express our support to your company and the value added product you produce in the Huon Valley and at Smithton.

As a local community group we know that the billets supplied to you are legal, sustainable and certified by an independent auditor. We are shocked that Will Mooney, one of a core group of 10 activists calling themselves the Huon Environment Centre, has been to London to bully your customers and make outrageous claims about the source of your product in conjunction with Greenpeace and its front group, Markets for Change.

You and your fellow directors may not be aware that this environment group was founded by an electoral officer of Senator Bob Brown and the officer's partner. It is clearly running an agenda that is identical to the Greens party demand to end native forest harvesting for industry. It was this political officer who hosted Clare Rewcastle of the Sarawak Report in Tasmania when she made misleading and damaging claims about your major Malaysian shareholder.

However, I can assure you that the vast majority of the Huon Valley community supported by its political leadership at council through Mayor Robert Armstrong and in the Legislative Council by Paul Harriss, do not share Senator Brown's false attitude to your environmentally friendly product. In fact we applaud your investment and the creation of jobs in our community.

We support both you and your customers in standing up to this harassment by these radical green groups and believe there is genuine market support for firms targeted by the minority greens. This is evident with the increased support to Harvey Norman that shows there is a consumer backlash against environmental blackmail.

We are also pleased that the Government and Opposition at both State and Federal levels have confirmed that it is legal and sustainable to be supplied from the 430,000 ha described in the IGA.

As a community group, we would like to invite your fellow Directors and any visiting customer representatives to meet our community and visit our forest. We are extremely proud of their condition after almost 200 years of harvesting and are keen to show them as a sustainable and renewable source of social, economic and environmental benefit.

Regards

Huon Resource Development Group  
8367 Channel Highway, Cradoc  
Ph 0409 973 344

28 Dec 2011

12 February 2012

Professor Jonathan West  
Chair, Independent Verification Group  
Tasmanian forest Intergovernmental Agreement

Dear Professor West,

When the Prime Minister and the Premier announced the appointment of you and your group, together with your terms of reference, it was reported that you would consult widely and effectively with stakeholders and the community. I wish to formally alert you to the lack of consultation with members of this group and the failure of your IVG to keep the community informed.

The Huon Resource Development group had initial contact through the TCA State Manager and apart from a farcical invitation to a communications forum in the Huon we have not met with your group or its consultants, whilst some other stakeholders have had extensive contact.

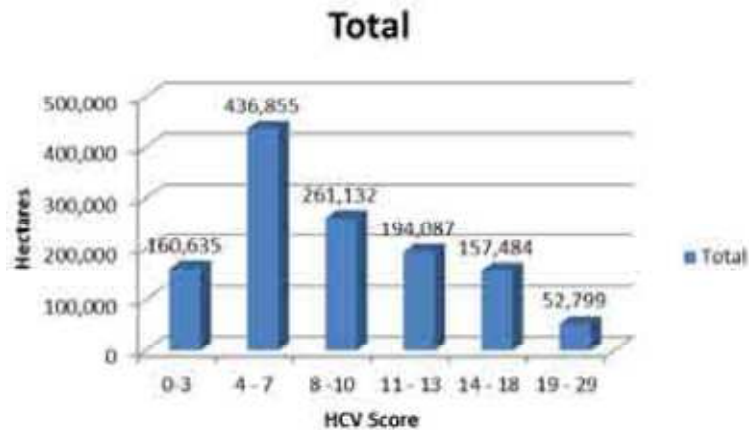
As members of the local community, business leaders, contractors and suppliers we believe our members can provide significant information of the social, economic and environmental importance of the management of the Huon's natural resources. Members have firsthand experience of working in the forests, of forest fires and the environmental values being studied by your group. A substantial number of our members are also fourth or fifth generation residents of the Huon Valley and are proud of the heritage of natural resource management in the Valley including forestry.

Many of the forests currently described by the Federal Minister for Forests, Senator Joe Ludwig, as "ancient" have been harvested by former generations of our families. Your lack of consultation with our group may continue this misapprehension.

The Huon Resource Development Group is also concerned with the definition of what constitutes high conservation value in the forests. We believe that for process to be credible the community must accept the definition you will use to measure the forest in the study area. So far your group has not even issued a draft definition, despite the term being defined elsewhere in both national and international forums.

One rating scale that we expected to be informed about and to have the opportunity to comment upon, is that developed by the Wilderness Society, ET and ACF. This is published in *Tasmania's Native Forests: Places for Protection- A background on the ENGO identified high conservation value reserve areas* in June 2011.

Section 4.4 of this report publishes the results of an Indicative Desktop Analysis of High Conservation Values across the State Forest Estate outside formal reserves (1.27 m ha). The process assigned all areas of the State Forest a high conservation value (HCV) score of between 0 and 29.



Only 4% scored 19 or greater. The graph shows that 96% of state forest has conservation value, if the community were presented with this graph by your group, they would not agree that the value of less than 60% was high.

[In reading this publication, the authors rely heavily on the work of B. Mackey, who is also a member of your Independent Group; he should be disqualified from any objective analysis of this rating scale.]

We therefore ask to meet with you urgently to ensure our views are included in your report to government and that your report has the credibility of being the result of wide community consultation and rigorous independent scientific assessment.

## Councillor Bruce Heron

**What:** Presentation to Council's on 'Statement of Principles' Forestry agreement

**Date:** Thursday 26 May 2011

**Where:** Campbell Town

- Good morning everyone. On behalf of the Mayor of the Huon Valley Council, I would like to comment on the Statement of Principles agreement and what it will mean for the Huon Valley and many other regional areas in Tasmania.
- The forest industry in the Huon Valley region is mainly conducted in state forests that are controlled and managed by Forestry Tasmania.
- The forest industry is an important industry in the Huon Valley. Our area is home to a number of timber mills and provides jobs for many forest contractors, a number of whom are small businesses.
- Currently in the Huon Valley there are 323 full time employees working in the forest industry. There is \$79.6 million in raw materials extracted and wages paid in our area alone, and \$18.2 million in value adding to materials extracted from the Huon Valley. The total value of the forestry industry to the Huon Valley is \$97.8 million.
- In addition, the wages earned by the 323 FTEs is predominantly expended within the Huon Valley and the flow on effect equates to approximately \$40 million plus to the local economy.
- The 323 FTEs are employed in the following areas:

Employment type	Number of employees
Forestry Tasmania	46
Contract harvesting	112
Silviculture	12
Tahune Airwalk/Island Speciality Timbers	16 + 6
Local sawmills, including Ta Ann	131
TOTAL	323

- If forest industry was to closed down, the impact would be far greater than just the 323 FTEs. For example, Geeveston economy is mainly dependent on forestry, as are Scottsdale, Triabunna Derwent Valley etc etc .

- There has already been a substantial impact on Geeveston as a result of the current downturn. (For example, in the last eight weeks, four small forestry silviculture businesses have closed.)
- Families would move out of the Huon Valley and rural Tasmania in search of work .Those that have all ready left have predominately gone to Western Australia and are predominately young families.
- The financial impact on Council revenue if just Forestry Tasmania was to close, would be a reduction in rate revenue of \$350,000 which would require a rate increase of 5 per cent to compensate.
- The financial impact will be substantially greater than this if we were to include the loss of rate revenue from other forest related businesses, such as Ta Ann and local sawmills.(Mike are Ta Ann covered within FT rates?)
- We believe an agreement to further lock up, or the reservation of our native forests, would have devastating effects on the Huon Valley economy and people's livelihoods.
- We believe that the Australian and Tasmanian Governments should re-affirm their commitment to the Regional Forest Agreement.
- We also advocate that our local timber mills should have their wood supply contracts and supply levels extended until 2027 as a minimum.
- We want to make sure that the Huon Valley remains a strong, prosperous and vibrant community.
- The Huon Valley Council believes that any forestry agreement where there is likely to be significant socio-economic impacts on our community should be considered, and the science of locking up further forest proven. 47% of Tasmania's total area is now permanently set aside in reserves.



25 March 2010

**The Hon Dick Adams MP**  
**Committee Chair**  
**House of Representatives Standing Committee**  
**on Agriculture, Resources, Fisheries and Forestry**  
**arff.reps@aph.gov.au**

# Inquiry into the Australian forestry industry

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The Huon Resource Development Group seeks to make a submission to this important inquiry. The Huon Valley has a proud tradition of sustainable management of our natural resources including agriculture, fishing and forestry. The beginnings of our timber heritage is recorded as a back drop to the Historical novel *Hearts of Oak* by Bill Leitch, industry development generally followed that of the rest of the State that is recorded in the Australian Bureau of Statistics Tasmanian Year book of 2000<sup>1</sup>. The feature article on the Tasmanian native forest industry shows a history of innovation and product development based upon our native timbers from residential and construction timber, industrial applications such as apple boxes, boat building and fine furniture to pulp and paper.

The Pulp and Paper Mill at Geeveston was established at the mouth of the Kermadie River in 1928, despite the belief that paper could not be made from eucalypt pulp. Yet despite this record of innovation the region's timber industry has been beset by conflict as a result of the political power of the environmental movement since the 1980's. This has manifested itself in a flurry of inquiries and 'agreements' starting with the Helsham inquiry and its overturning that resulted in a massive extension of the World Heritage Area, the Regional Forest Agreement and the latest bid to create an agreement to replace it based upon a statement of principles that essentially is seen by the Commonwealth appointed facilitator as trading additional native forest reservation for the achievement of the Bell Bay pulp mill approved by the Commonwealth and State Governments.

These inquiries and political deals have been accompanied by forest protests such as Farmhouse Creek in March 1986 and continue today in the Weld and Picton valleys. Protest and disputation was a key feature to the opposition to value adding the timber resource within the Huon Valley when the project known as Southwood was first proposed. This centre includes merchandising, Sawmilling, Rotary Peeling and it is planned to use residues for Electricity generation and timber drying.

The Huon Resource Development Group was formed after amalgamating the Southwood supporters Group and the Huon Valley Branch of timber communities Australia. As a result of the groups experience with protests and misinformation about forest management, the

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000, 1301.6 - Tasmanian Year Book, 2000 available at <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1301.6Main+Features12000?OpenDocument>

Group has decided to prepare a forest policy that is focused on the sustainable management of the native forests in the Huon district and form a sound basis for future product and market development.

The policy is attached for the committee's information and is designed to support progressive development in the Huon Valley to continue a vibrant and sustainable community. The policy addresses the impact of fire, high conservation values, the forest cycle and ecological determinants in determining sustainable forest practices that bring multiple benefits to the community. The policy supports the Regional forest Agreement and the relevant findings of the Independent Review of the Commonwealth's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act.

The policy also addresses legitimate concerns on the current green demands reflected in the Statement of Principles process that may lead to a transition of timber production from native forests. In short, a transition from native forests would mean an abandonment of the Regional Forest Agreement and the Group believes such a transition will destroy the Huon Valley forest sector.

The Group believes that the current and future prospects of the forestry industry in the Huon Valley depends on continued access to native forests as provided for under the National Forest Policy Statement. Such a commitment by Government can provide the industry to grow in the long term and to be able to accept opportunities that provide social, economic and environmental benefit.

The Group invites the committee to inspect the Southern Forests of the Huon and to visit the Southwood complex, local sawmills and forest harvesters to meet the timber workers and community leaders to hear first hand their hopes and aspirations for their families and for a vibrant community.

Kind Regards

Alan Duggan,  
President

Attached Forest Policy

## **Huon Resource Development Group**

# **Policy on forest use and sustainable development**

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**Our group is based with its focus on supporting developments in the Huon Valley based on the sound management of our natural resources.**

### **Mission Statement**

**Supporting progressive development in the Huon Valley through the democratic representation at all levels of Government ensuring a vibrant and sustainable community**

### **Introduction:**

The group is committed to encourage and support industries which use Tasmania's natural advantages to provide for the well-being of its citizens and to increase wealth in a sustainable manner while maintaining the health and diversity of natural ecosystems.

For almost 200 years industries based upon our natural assets including forestry, farming and fishing have provided a proud heritage for the Huon Valley. The area is renowned for its produce, fruit, wine, seafood, mushrooms and gourmet delicacies. The Franklin Wooden Boat School demonstrates how Tasmania's fine timbers are turned into boats, the Geeveston Forest and Heritage Centre promotes the history of forestry in the region.

The Huon Valley has embraced its heritage while forging ahead with newer industries, agriculture, viticulture, forestry; tourism and aquaculture thrive side by side.

The forest industry is based on the natural advantages Tasmania has of soils of moderate to high fertility for forests, adequate rainfall, outstanding renewable timber resources with rapid growth rates and proximity to ports.

However in recent years the management of our forests, the value adding and downstream processing of timber has become a political issue. The Huon Valley's local economy was almost destroyed with the overturning of the recommendation of the Helsham inquiry that only 27,400 ha of forest had World heritage value, instead a political deal by Canberra to appease the greens resulted in 600,000 ha being added to the World Heritage Area in 1989.

The Regional Forest Agreement that was signed in 1997 reserved a further 293,000 ha of native forest. This agreement, to last for 20 years, created certainty to see a proposal to develop an investment ready site at Southwood in 2001. The Southwood supporter's group (the forerunner of this group) was formed to promote the sustainable benefits of this development.

After the planning permit was issued in 2002, the group affiliated with the national grassroots organisation, Timber Communities Australia. The Southwood site currently hosts a regrowth sawmill, selling the sawn product into the Australian market, a rotary peeled veneer plant selling product into south east Asia and a modern log segregation facility to maximise the return from each log delivered to site. All are employ locals.

Another exciting step in the development will be the provision of renewable power- bio energy, generated from the forest residues after harvesting for sawn timber and pulp wood from local multiple use forests. This will have major benefits in reducing the fire risk in the forests, and reducing the need for large fuel reduction burns and resultant smoke.

Having the power station on site will mean costs are minimised for those investors seeking to produce product for the international market place. Plants like laminated veneer lumber planned in the longer term will mean value-adding the timber that fails to meet sawlog requirements rather than exporting it as wood chip.

Projects like Southwood and traditional sawmilling enterprises will have long term benefits to communities within the valley, providing our native forests, supplemented by plantations, are managed under principles of sustainability based upon the scientific evaluation of our forests.

Whilst the Huon Resource Development group addresses issues such as road infrastructure, aquaculture, farming and tourism, a major focus is on forests and the employment that their sustainable management can create.

Many newer settlers to the Huon Valley admire the forests for their scenic, landscape and intrinsic values, not realising that the forests result from both wildfire such as those massive fires in 1898, 1914, 1934 and 1967 and from silvicultural regeneration. well managed forestry is compatible with scenic and landscape values.

This policy seeks to advance opportunities for value adding, diversification and product innovation; by outlining principles governing science-based native forest harvest, addressing social and environmental perceptions and ensuring balance with economic outcomes, to provide a sustainable future for this and future generations of the Huon Valley community.

## Fire and forests

1. Tasmania's landscape, including its forests, has always been modified by fires.
2. After the arrival of the first settlers in Tasmania about 40,000 years ago fire frequency increased, as it did in all places around the world when humans first arrived.
3. Tasmania's eucalypt forests are a product of fire and ecosystem disturbance. Forest growth begins with seed germinating after fire and in their natural state forests are 'destroyed' by fire, allowing a new cycle of growth to begin.
4. Fire is a natural part of the eucalypt ecosystem and fires are inevitable - one cannot 'save' a eucalypt forest.
5. Even in rare cases of the interval between fires being longer than the lifespan of eucalypts (about 400 years) the eucalypt forest is not preserved or 'saved' - it gives way to rainforest.

## High conservation value forests

1. The high conservation value forests in Tasmania have already been defined and mapped and identified by foresters and forest scientists. They are those forests

containing rare or endangered species of animals or plants or unusual associations of plants, or vegetation that was once widespread but is now of limited extent.

2. Most high conservation value forests are already set aside and managed as national parks and forest reserves.
3. Those high conservation value forests not already set aside are mostly found in the drier eastern part of Tasmania or in areas now dominated by agricultural production. Many are on private land.
4. Much of the HCV forest is within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage area, where an independent Mission investigating whether the area's boundaries should be expanded due to threats to HCV forests, found in 2008: "Considering the representation of old growth forest, including of the tall *Eucalyptus* forest within the area covered by the TWWHA and its management plan, as well as in the other reserves in Tasmania, and the fact that potential threats from production forestry activities are well managed, the mission does not recommend any change to the boundaries of the property to deal with such threats"

### The sustainable forest cycle

1. The highest value sawn timbers are found in Tasmania's wet eucalypt forests which support the taller trees such as *Eucalyptus regnans* and *Eucalyptus obliqua*. These forests cannot be selectively harvested – they only regenerate in areas cleared of competition, where harvesting residue is burnt and an ash bed created. Evidence shows that wet forests can be grown sustainably (probably forever) by clearfell, burn and sow methods, in harvest cycles of about 80 years.
2. Most medium to high altitude moist forests are dominated by *Eucalyptus delegatensis*. These forests can be selectively harvested and the better trees have timber quality similar to that obtained from *Eucalyptus regnans* and *Eucalyptus obliqua* forests at low altitude. Ground disturbance during harvest, or a light burn, is sufficient to induce regeneration. Partial (selective) harvest can be repeated at intervals of about 30-40 years.
3. Dry forests (mostly in the east) generally contain lower value timber trees and have lower timber yields. Dry forests can be selectively harvested but growth rates are slow and the partial harvest cycle is about 40-60 years.
4. Commercial native forests managed on long cycles have more intact ecosystems and greater biodiversity than commercial plantations.

### Ecological determinants of wood quality

1. Recent technical innovations mean that second-grade native timber, with lower quality than that required for sawn products, can be rotary peeled for the manufacture of veneer products such as plywood and flooring rather than used for lower value woodchips.
2. Special species timbers (e.g. myrtle and sassafras) are used by specialist furniture makers and craftspeople. Trees providing these timbers cannot be

harvested in isolation as they typically form a small percentage of the total timber harvest in clearfelled wet eucalypt forests, which require a burn before regeneration will occur.

3. Further technical research and investment is likely to lead to a higher percentage of wood from native forests being used for high value products.

### **Sustainable forest practices**

1. All native forest harvest is governed by the Forest Practices Act and requires a Forest Practices Plan. Each plan must take into account special values relating to biodiversity, soil and water, geosciences, landscape and cultural heritage.
2. Forest Practices Plans are prepared by professional foresters, who, in addition to their training in forest management, have undertaken courses in forest practices and are accredited by the Forest Practices Authority. Many Forest Practices Plans require specialist advice from the FPA.
3. Most areas planned for harvest ('coupes') are about 50 ha or less in size, and typically about 20% of the area of each coupe is set aside in un-harvested reserves for special values, for example, to protect streams and riparian areas, to protect rare species, to provide habitat for fauna living in tree hollows, or to protect archaeological sites.
4. Foresters inspect coupes during and after harvest to check that all provisions in Forest Practices Plans have been adhered to, including provisions for adequate regeneration.
5. In any one year about 15% of coupes are inspected in detail by the Forest Practices Authority to ensure that the Forest Practices Plans for these coupes have been fully complied with. Results of these compliance checks are published annually.
6. The high standards of planning, or on-the-ground environmental checks, and public reporting provided by the Tasmanian Forest Practices system exceed the requirements of international forest certification schemes being considered for Tasmania.
7. The FSC system has no code of practice, lacks any detail tailored to Tasmanian conditions, and contains no provisions for on-ground planning, specialist supervision or compliance checks. Applied in isolation it would provide a lower level of environmental protection to Tasmanian native forests than the Forest Practices Code.

### **Native Forest Harvest and the Community**

- Native forest harvest provides several thousand jobs for forest planners, harvesting contractors, truck drivers, sawmillers, wood processors and trained firefighters in Tasmania. Jobs are concentrated in small and large regional centres such as Huonville and Geeveston. There is potential for a catastrophic effect on regional areas of Tasmania if native forest harvest is curtailed.
- The forest road network including the associated infrastructure (bridges and culverts) not only provides for forest harvest but allows access for services

important to the community, e.g. access for firefighting, tourists and beekeepers. This access is largely financed out of income gained from sales of forest products.

- Many foresters are professionally trained in firefighting in forests. In the fire season firefighters are on call to control forest fires and, if necessary, to protect houses and lives. Forestry companies also man fire towers and patrol forests during the fire season.
- The cost of firefighting, of fire patrols and of maintaining equipment such as fleets of fire trucks is largely financed out of income by Forestry Tasmania and the other commercial companies.
- If firefighting costs were not supported out of income from the sale of wood products, the cost of maintaining the road network, bridges and fire towers, and of providing fire patrols, fire trucks and trained personnel would fall entirely to the state. In practice it would probably be financed from greatly increased fire insurance levies or taxation. Alternatively, firefighting capability would be allowed to run down, to save costs.
- Maintaining access to forests is essential if potentially catastrophic fires, capable of devastating small communities and semi-rural suburban areas around major towns and cities, are to be avoided. Without this access, community safety would be severely compromised.

### **Forest Management provided by the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) and the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act**

The RFA ensures that almost half the State's native forests are not subject to timber harvesting. This is 5 times the international bench mark set by the green groups such as WWF and the IUCN and by the Convention for Biological Diversity. This outstanding environmental achievement was recently confirmed by the independent review of the EPBC Act that found:

“As a consequence of the Tasmanian RFA, 79 per cent of old growth forest and 97 per cent of high quality wilderness is in reservation. This exceeds the global target of effective conservation of 10 per cent each of the world's ecological regions, set out under the Convention for Biological Diversity.”

The reviewer noted that “These achievements, which often go overlooked or unremarked in debate, deserve greater public recognition.”

Yet the Statement of Principles and the latest green demands will place at risk these achievements.

### **Flaws in latest Green Demands**

For the 2004 Federal election the Australian Conservation foundation and the Wilderness Society identified 240,000 ha of forests to be added to the reserves system. In a compromise the Federal Government agreed to reserve about 140,000 ha of this forest, making a total of over 1.4 million hectares of public forest reserved.



The same green groups have now found 600,000 ha of forest outside the formal reserves; apparently only 120,000 ha are in 'informal reserves'. Despite assessments carried out under the Regional Forest Agreement process and the World Heritage commission and their management under the RFA and EPBC Act, the green groups have labelled these forests as having high conservation value and demanded their lock up so the new total to be reserved is 1.9 million ha of the 2.2 million publicly owned native forests.

The ENGOs have failed to identify forests already reserved that could be exchanged for these new demands.

Conservation values have been defined by the Convention of Biological Diversity and were reflected in the JANIS criteria used to create a Comprehensive Adequate and representative Reserve System, together with ecological sustainable forest management under the RFA in 1997.

The HCVF concept was initially developed by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for use in forest management certification and first published in 1999. The FSC International standard defines it as:

High Conservation Value Forests are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:

- a) forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance
- b) forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems
- c) forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control)
- d) forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).

There has been no independent check of these proposed HCV forests, or "due diligence" undertaken. Calls for their reservation are also at odds with continued forest management including production outlined by Principle 9 the FSC.

The Statement of Principles process proposes that the forest industry will be allowed to harvest some of the balance 300,000 ha, mostly regrowth from past harvesting since 1960, for a short period of time, until the young plantations planted since Helsham and RFA can produce sawlogs for any remaining sawmillers!

The irony is, that plantations produce a very different product and environment than Tasmania's highly productive native forests. Our sawmills will need to convert from a specialty product to a commodity competing with plantations from the tropics and the developing world. Even the recently commissioned rotary veneer peeler plant at Southwood will not be able to use the less dense and more flexible plantation wood.

**In short, a transition from native forests, an abandonment of the Regional Forest Agreement and not providing long term contracts for processors will destroy the Huon Valley forest sector.**



Tasmania will also be at a disadvantage in marketing plantation wood, as even though the Statement of Principles encourages certification, the Forest Stewardship Council prohibits the certification of “Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994”.

## Conclusion

The Huon Resource Development Group has unanimously supported a motion that the Commonwealth acts to reject demands for more reservation, that it sticks by the RFA and that it gives security to the sawmillers, family contractors, the workers and their families who depend upon a diverse economy that includes a native forest sector.

The Huon Resource Development Group of Timber Communities Australia will only participate in discussions with Government and members of the State and Federal Parliaments within the following:

- Ongoing supply to Tasmanian sawmills of logs from native forest, together with the ability to sell residues from these sawlog operations and sawmilling activities. This means that there will be no transition from native forest for the processing of sawlogs and special species timber
- Ongoing supply to Tasmanian rotary veneer mills and future processing plants outlined in the Tasmanian forest industry growth strategy including the approved pulp mill
- No existing contract or statutory obligation (including the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement) can be breached
- Prior to detailed consideration of the Statement of Principles, adopt a definition of High Conservation Value forest consistent with the JANIS criteria developed for the RFA or the International *High Conservation Value Forests: The concept in theory and practice* brochure published by the WWF International in 2007
- Once such a definition is agreed, and the forests are evaluated and a management plan developed, if the volume of resource is reduced, suitable forest currently outside the production area will be identified as an alternate harvest area

This complements the resolution adopted at a conference of TCA members in Tasmania held prior to the signing of the Statement of Principles:

“We support;

1. The Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement.
2. The construction of a pulp mill as approved
3. No new forests to be added to the reserve system until these forests have been independently and scientifically assessed and verified for their high conservation values and an appropriate management plan determined through a comprehensive community stakeholder process.”

In summary, such a commonsense approach will see the timber industry that pioneered Tasmania continue, based on the sustainable management of our renewable forest resource. A drive along the Arve Road to the Picton and Huon rivers demonstrates just how well our wet eucalypt forest regenerates after clearfell burn and sow silviculture treatment, which was developed by our forest scientists in the 1950s and 1960's and can continue to provide both timber and environmental values forever.

### **Attachment Critique of IVG Chairman’s report – Mandate and Independence**

This report was issued by the Chairman after the publication of a summary report and a series of technical reports. The Chairman’s report includes matters not covered either by the Terms of reference or the technical report. It is also riddled with errors, some of which have already been reported as fact by the media. The chairman’s report demonstrates that the IVG has not met its terms of reference nor do the technical reports provide a credible basis for future negotiations.

The key elements missing is what constitutes High Conservation Value forests (HCVF) and an independent assessment of areas claimed to be HCVF are in fact HCVF, and if those values are higher than those within the existing reserve system that equates to 47% of Tasmania’s native forests or the more relevant figure of 64% of its public native forest as the IVG task was restricted to only public forest.

#### **Flawed Mandate:**

The Chairman selects part of his second term of reference as the mandate for his reporting. Yet the Government listed 10 terms of reference, and whilst some related to consultation and reporting, the **key tasks** could be divided into both the verification of wood supply and verification of conservation values.

Term of Reference(TOR) No 5 states “Assess and provide advice about stakeholder claims relating to conservation values, areas and boundaries of potential reserves from within the ENGO-nominated 572,000 hectares of High Conservation Value native forest. (Clauses 20 and 28)”<sup>i</sup>

This TOR is not stated in the Chairman’s assessment of his mandate. Yet neither the Chairman’s report nor the technical papers demonstrate how these values are defined to be HCVF. This despite the ENGO’s claims listing what they considered to be HCVF in State Forests outside reserves and rating it on a value of 0-29, with only 4% exceeding 20 to be considered high! (52,799 ha)<sup>ii</sup>.

#### **Independent Validated Information:**

The Chairman claims that his goal was to provide a body of independently validated information, yet key people that he chose to provide this independence have strong links to the ENGO’s making the claims being assessed.

The initial Heads of Agreement between the two Governments promised “The process will be conducted by a body **independent** of both Governments and **all other stakeholders** and resourced by the Australian Government. The appointment of authors that have clearly got strong associations with the ENGO’s and have had their work quoted in ENGO submissions to justify claims of conservation value should make the general public and the taxpayer apprehensive of bias in these reviewers regardless of how expert they may be.

The lead author of the Wood Supply Technical report, **Mark Burgman**, signed a Wilderness Society letter in 2004 demanding more reservation of Tasmania forests<sup>iii</sup>. The map of forests included in the publication containing the letter is virtually identical with the current claim, (excluding reserves created in 2005, and including the West Wellington claims).

The lead author of the Forest conservation technical report, **Brendan Mackey**, was a founding member of the Wilderness Society's Wild Country Science panel<sup>iv</sup> and also the author of Green Carbon a report funded by the Wilderness Society. He is also the Australian representative of the IUCN that has stated policy critical of Tasmania forest practices and world heritage boundaries<sup>v</sup>.

A key researcher assisting Brendan Mackey was **Virginia Young**<sup>vi</sup> a former National Forest Campaigner for the Wilderness Society and pioneer of the WildCountry approach.

The author of reports 1A Comprehensiveness, 1Bii Representativeness and 3E Tree Hollows is **Rod Knight**, of Natural Resource Planning, a Tasmanian Conservation Trust activist that has critiqued the Statement of Principals process<sup>vii</sup>. Knight with Alistair Graham criticised the RFA in 1998, claiming the RFA failed to reserve sufficient forest.<sup>viii</sup>

The author of Report 5a Heritage Values is **Peter Hitchcock**, one of the three Commissioners of the 1987 Helsham inquiry<sup>ix</sup> who gave the dissenting minority report that was used to overturn the majority finding that less than 10% of the studied forest had World Heritage Value. Peter Hitchcock states in his report that he had a consultancy on boundary review of TWWHA, yet fails to State this was for the Wilderness Society and Environment Tasmania<sup>x</sup>, that has published his paper on the need to expand the World Heritage Area, nor that he present to the International Monitoring Team<sup>xi</sup>, or that he was flown to Canada to lobby the Commission to reject the findings of the expert team<sup>xii</sup>.

Report 8a Carbon Value written by the ANU's **Andrew Macintosh** reflects speeches the author has provided to the Wilderness Society and its allies, such as the 2009 Biodiversity Summit<sup>xiii</sup>

**Peter McQuillan** is the author of Report 9a to test the adequacy of the ENGO submission but he was also the public face of the Environmental movement (Wilderness Society, Get Up, Our Common Ground) in advertising<sup>xiv</sup> to locking up forest, and he has travelled to Japan to encourage a boycott of Tasmanian wood<sup>xv</sup>. He also appeared as a witness to Senator Bob Brown in the Wielangta trial<sup>xvi</sup>.

**Sean Cadman** a long term Wilderness Society and forest activist is a co- author of the Social Values report, and assessed Tall Eucalypt forest in the Heritage report. He is claimed by the CEO of Gunns Limited to be the genesis of the Statement of Principles/ IGA process<sup>xvii</sup>. Sean Cadman activism was seen at Jackey's Marsh in 1986 along the Great Western Tiers where he worked with Jonathan West to gain national prominence for the protest<sup>xviii</sup>.

West also employed a number of Timber industry people including Bob Smith former Head of NSW Forestry, now a Director of Forestry Tasmania, Allan Hansard formerly DAFF and NAFI and George Harris, a specialty species timber advocate. These also cannot be considered independent. The balance of the report was written by scientists from CRCs, UTAS and the independent Forest Practices Authority.

West was also a National Director of the Wilderness Society from 1986 to 1987 and is credited with creating the political will for the first major Commonwealth intervention with the Helsham Inquiry. West was initially a campaigner for the Wilderness Society and ACF in the early 1980s before becoming an adviser to the Federal ALP Environment Minister, Barry Cohen prior to returning to the Wilderness Society in 1986. In January 1987 he gave a media interview where he outlined the agenda of the Society:

“Leave untouched the forests listed on the National estate, principally the southern forests, the Lemonthyme, Jackey’s Marsh and the Douglas Apsley ... and there will be total peace”, he said. West said “the areas represented only 10 per cent of the forests available to logging.”<sup>xix</sup>

West was also involved as National Director in the Farmhouse Creek<sup>xx</sup> protests where current Greens Federal and State Leaders<sup>xxi</sup> were both arrested for their protest actions. Also at Farmhouse Creek was tree sitter Alec Marr the present CEO of Triabunna Investment the owner of the Triabunna Chip mill that is an integral part of the IGA.

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<sup>i</sup> Tasmanian Forest Agreement Independent Verification Group Terms of Reference 18 Nov 2011

[http://www.forestsagreement.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/IVG\\_ToR\\_as\\_endorsed\\_by\\_all\\_Signatories.pdf](http://www.forestsagreement.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/IVG_ToR_as_endorsed_by_all_Signatories.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> ACF, ET Wilderness Society 2011 Forest Tasmania’s Native Forests: Places for Protection

A background on the ENGO identified high conservation value reserve areas Section 4.4

<http://www.et.org.au/system/files/userfiles/Tasmanias%20Native%20Forests%20Places%20for%20Protection%20August%202011.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Statement of Concerned Scientists in ACF, Wilderness Society, August 2004, Protecting Forests Growing Jobs downloaded at –

[http://www.acfonline.org.au/sites/default/files/resources/protecting\\_forests\\_growing\\_jobs.pdf](http://www.acfonline.org.au/sites/default/files/resources/protecting_forests_growing_jobs.pdf) 29 March 2012

<sup>iv</sup> WildCountry Science accessed at [http://www.wilderness.org.au/campaigns/wildcountry/wc\\_science](http://www.wilderness.org.au/campaigns/wildcountry/wc_science) dated 29 March 2012

<sup>v</sup> As claimed by the Wilderness Society see <http://www.wilderness.org.au/campaigns/forests/WH-tas> accessed 29 March 2012

<sup>vi</sup> Strategic Interventions Virginia Young <http://strategicinterventions.net/virginia-young/> accessed 29 March 2012

<sup>vii</sup> The Tasmanian Conservationist March 2011 Edition 322 page 7 at

<http://www.tct.org.au/support/documents/TCTNewsletterNo322FinalWebsite.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> Graham A Knight R, 1998, Regional Forest Agreements – Lessons learnt from Tasmania, 150 Wilderness News Vol 6, Ed 7

<sup>ix</sup> David Barnett, 1999, Tasmania’s green Disease <http://www.ipa.org.au/library/review51-1%20Tasmanias%20Green%20Disease.pdf>

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- <sup>x</sup> Hitchcock P, 2008, World Heritage at the Crossroads. Wilderness Society, Environment Tasmania  
<http://www.wilderness.org.au/files/world-heritage-exec-summary>
- <sup>xi</sup> Tasmanian Wilderness (Australia), report of the reactive monitoring team 15 to 20 March 2008 available at  
[whc.unesco.org/document/100706](http://whc.unesco.org/document/100706) page 13
- <sup>xii</sup> Wilderness Society see <http://www.wilderness.org.au/campaigns/forests/WH-tas> accessed 29 March 2012
- <sup>xiii</sup> Wilderness society Biodiversity for Climate Protection Forum 2009 see  
<http://www.wilderness.org.au/regions/new-south-wales/biodiversity-for-climate-protection-forum> accessed  
29 March 2012
- <sup>xiv</sup> Television advertisement at <http://www.wilderness.org.au/regions/tasmania/forest-tv-ad>
- <sup>xv</sup> *The Panther* Summer 2007 Rainforest Action Network  
[http://ran.org/sites/default/files/175\\_summer\\_2007.pdf](http://ran.org/sites/default/files/175_summer_2007.pdf)
- <sup>xvi</sup> Federal Court of Australia Transcript of Proceeding 14 Feb 2006 <http://www.on-trial.info/transcripts/14%20Feb%202006.pdf> page P-1207
- <sup>xvii</sup> ABC Drum Many voices in the pulp mill discussion March 2011 at  
<http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/45786.html>
- <sup>xviii</sup> Gee, H, 2001 For the Forests Page 90 Wilderness Society
- <sup>xix</sup> The Sunday Tasmania 18 January 1987
- <sup>xx</sup> Sunday Examiner 8 March 1987, The Mercury 9 March 1987,
- <sup>xxi</sup> Nick McKim 2002 Maiden Speech <http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ha/ISMckimNick.htm> accessed 29  
March 2012